

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A chain assembly method for joining a linkplate chain having alternating outer and inner chain links ~~using prefabricated inner chain links~~ preferably comprising ~~two parallel link plates (2, 3) and hollow pins (4, 5) connecting the latter, characterized by,~~ said assembly method comprising the following steps:

providing ~~at least one~~ two completely prefabricated inner chain link ~~(1)~~ links,

positioning the two inner chain links in a row and link ~~(1)~~ so that ~~[[the]]~~ a hollow pin axis ~~[[A]]~~ of each of the at least one two inner chain link ~~(1)~~ links is aligned substantially parallel to a hollow pin axis of the other and to a supporting or retaining face of the inner chain link (1) links,

providing ~~at least one~~ two link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins,

positioning the ~~at least one~~ two link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins so that ~~[[the]]~~ an axis of each link pin axis (A) is arranged coaxially with ~~[[the]]~~ a hollow pin axis ~~[[A]]~~ of the ~~associated hollow pin (4, 5) of an~~ one of the two inner chain link ~~(1)~~ links,

inserting the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins into the hollow pin axes ~~(4, 5)~~ by means of relative displacement of the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins and of the ~~at least one~~ two inner chain link ~~(1)~~

links in relation to each other so that ~~[[the]]~~ end regions of ~~[[the]]~~ link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins project ~~[[on]]~~ from both sides of the two inner chain links,

providing at least one pair of outer link plates having receiving holes for the link pins ~~(10, 11)~~, positioning the outer link plates so that each end region of ~~[[a]]~~ the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins is assigned one of the receiving holes of the outer link plates ~~(10, 11)~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates and ~~[[the]]~~ an axis ~~[[B]]~~ of the receiving ~~hole~~ ~~(12, 13)~~ holes is aligned with the axis ~~[[A]]~~ of the associated link pin ~~(6, 7)~~,

pressing the two outer link plates ~~(10, 11)~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates in one operation onto the end regions of the two link pins ~~(6, 7)~~ to produce an outer chain link connected to ~~at least~~ the two inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ arranged in a row, and

riveting the ends of the link pins ~~(6, 7)~~.

2. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1, in which the arrangement of the inner chain ~~link~~ ~~(1)~~ links on the supporting or retaining face is carried out in such a way that the hollow pin axes ~~[[A]]~~ are arranged substantially at right angles to the action of the force of gravity.

3. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1 or 2, in which the inner chain ~~link~~ ~~(1)~~ links are positioned first and then the associated link pins ~~(6, 7)~~ are supplied to be positioned.

4. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 1 or 2, in which the link pins (6, 7) are positioned first and then the associated inner chain link (1) is links are supplied to be positioned.

5. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in one of claims~~ of claim 1 to 4, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the outer link plates (10, 11) of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates are positioned simultaneously from both sides relative to the associated inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~.

6. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in one of claims~~ of claim 1 to 5, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the action of pressing the two outer link plates (10, 11) of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates ~~[[on]]~~ in one operation is carried out symmetrically in relation to the link pins (6, 7) previously fixed symmetrically with respect to a chain center line ~~[[M]]~~.

7. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in one of claims~~ of claim 1 to 6, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the method steps are combined into four cycle groups, the steps of one cycle group being carried out simultaneously by machines,

the first cycle group ~~comprises~~ having the steps:

providing ~~at least one completely prefabricated~~ the two inner chain link ~~(1)~~ links,
positioning the inner chain link ~~(1)~~ links in a row so that ~~[[the]]~~ a hollow pin axis ~~[[A]]~~ of
~~the at least one~~ each inner chain link ~~[[1]]~~ is aligned substantially parallel to the hollow
pin axes of the other and to a supporting or retaining face of the inner chain link ~~(1)~~
links,

the second cycle group ~~comprises~~ having the steps:

providing ~~at least one~~ the two link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins, positioning the ~~at least one two~~ link pin
~~(6, 7)~~ pins so that ~~[[the]]~~ an axis of each pin axis ~~(A)~~ is arranged coaxially with ~~[[the]]~~ a
hollow pin axis ~~[[A]]~~ of ~~[[the]]~~ an associated hollow pin ~~(4, 5)~~ of an inner chain link
~~[[1]]~~, inserting the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins into the hollow pin ~~(4, 5)~~ axes by means of
relative displacement of the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~ pins and of the ~~at least one two~~ inner chain
link ~~(1)~~ links in relation to one another so that ~~[[the]]~~ end regions of the link pin ~~(6, 7)~~
pins project ~~[[on]]~~ from both sides of the inner chain links,

the third cycle group ~~comprises~~ having the steps:

providing at least one pair of outer link plates having receiving holes ~~(12, 13)~~ for the link
pins ~~(6, 7)~~, positioning the at least one pair of outer link plates so that each end region

of a link pin (6, 7) is assigned a receiving hole of an outer link plate (10, 11) of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates and ~~[[the]]~~ an axis ~~[[B]]~~ of ~~[[the]]~~ a receiving hole (12, 13) is aligned with the axis ~~[[A]]~~ of the associated link pin (6, 7), pressing the two outer link plates (10, 11) of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates in one operation onto the end regions of the two link pins (6, 7) to produce an outer chain link connected to ~~at least~~ the two inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ arranged in a row, and

the fourth cycle group ~~comprises~~ having the step:

riveting the ends of the link pins (6, 7).

8. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in one of claims~~ claim 1 ~~[[to~~ 7]] for producing a multiple chain, ~~in particular a duplex chain,~~ which additionally comprises the following steps:

arranging two sets of inner chain links in a row, each set comprising at least two completely prefabricated inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ lying beside each other so that the hollow pin axes (A) of the inner chain links (1) ~~lying beside each other~~ thereof are arranged coaxially with one another,

joining at least one center link plate (14, 15) having receiving holes (17, 18) for the link pins (6, 7) between the two sets of inner chain links (1) ~~lying beside each other~~ so that ~~[[the]]~~ receiving hole axes ~~[[C]]~~ of the center link plate are arranged coaxially with the hollow pin axes ~~[[A]]~~ of the inner chain links.

9.. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 8, ~~in which~~ wherein the link pins (6, 7) are positioned first and then the associated inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ and center link ~~plates (14, 15)~~ plate are supplied to be positioned.

10. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 8 ~~or 9,~~ ~~characterized in that~~ wherein the method steps are combined into five cycle groups, the steps of one cycle group being carried out substantially simultaneously by machines,

the first cycle group ~~comprising~~ having the steps:

~~providing at least one completely prefabricated~~ the two sets of inner chain link (1) links, positioning the two sets of inner chain link (1) links in a row so that the hollow pin axes ~~[[A]]~~ of the ~~at least one inner chain link (1) is~~ links are aligned substantially parallel to ~~[[the]]~~ each other and a supporting or retaining face of the inner chain link (1), ~~arranging~~ at least two completely prefabricated links, the two inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ of each set

lying beside each other so that the hollow pin axes (A) of the inner chain links (1) lying beside each other thereof are arranged coaxially with one another,

the second cycle group comprises having the steps:

joining at least one center link plate (14, 15) having [[a]] receiving hole (17, 18) holes for the link pins (6, 7) between the two sets of inner chain links (1) lying beside each other so that [[the]] receiving hole axes [[C]] of the center link plate are arranged coaxially with the hollow pin axes [[A]] of the inner chain links,

the third cycle group comprises having the steps:

providing at least one the two link pin (6, 7) pins, positioning the at least one two link pin (6, 7) pins so that [[the]] an axis of each pin axis (A) is arranged coaxially with [[the]] a hollow pin axis [[A]] of [[the]] an associated hollow pin (4, 5) of an inner chain link [[1]], inserting the link pin (6, 7) pins into the hollow pin (4, 5) axes and the receiving holes of the center link plate by means of relative displacement of the link pin (6, 7) pins and of the at least one inner chain link (1) links and center link plate in relation to each other so that [[the]] end regions of the link pin (6, 7) pins project [[on]] from both sides of the two sets of inner chain links,

the fourth cycle group comprises having the steps:

providing at least one pair of outer link plates having ~~[[a]]~~ receiving hole ~~(12,13)~~ holes
for the link pins, positioning the at least one pair of outer link plates so that each end
region of a link pin ~~(6,7)~~ is assigned ~~[[one]]~~ a receiving hole of ~~[[the]]~~ an outer link
plates ~~(10,11)~~ plate of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates and ~~[[the]]~~ an axis ~~[[B]]~~ of
~~[[the]]~~ a receiving hole ~~(12,13)~~ is aligned with the axis ~~[[A]]~~ of the associated link pin
~~(6,7)~~, pressing the two outer link plates ~~(10,11)~~ of ~~[[a]]~~ the pair of outer link plates in
one operation onto the end regions of the two link pins ~~(6,7)~~ to produce an outer chain
link connected to at least two sets of inner chain links ~~[[1]]~~ arranged in a row~~[[,]]~~ with
the center link plate between them, and

the fifth cycle group comprises having the step:

riveting the ends of the link pins ~~(6,7)~~.

11. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 10, ~~characterized~~
~~in that wherein~~ the first and second cycle ~~[[group]]~~ groups are carried out in a different
sequence.

12. (Currently amended) The method ~~as claimed in~~ of claim 11, ~~characterized~~
~~in that~~ wherein the link ~~pin (6, 7) is~~ pins are pushed into the center link plate ~~(14, 15)~~
before the first cycle group is carried out.